

# From the Pits.

The Newsletter of the Weston Model Flying Club

[www.wmfclub.co.uk](http://www.wmfclub.co.uk)

April 2005

## Editorial

I've moved! I'm now 10 minutes closer to the flying field as well. If you want to contact me see the last page for my new address & phone number.



For any of the newer club members who may not be aware of **Pat Teakle**'s long and distinguished history in R/C modelling, we have a very interesting article based on an interview with Pat which should fill in a lot of the gaps.

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## Club Meetings

We've had another good start to the year as far as club meetings are concerned. February saw a most interesting and well-informed talk on the history of radio-control from **Pat Teakle & Mike Barnett**, In March **Paul Lathall** demonstrated covering with Solarfilm, although the ensuing discussion covered (!) all sorts of covering materials.

The April event was rather out of the ordinary, as new member **Roy Shaw** introduced himself by giving a very well-received talk on his experiences as a magistrate.

Finally for now, the May event will be a model examination, i.e. a demonstration of what to look for in checking a model over.

As usual, the club meetings in June, July and August will be held at the field. The meetings start at 8pm as normal, but are usually short and informal with plenty of time for flying. If the weather is bad, the meeting should be considered cancelled, as the room at the Ashcombe is not booked for these 3 months.

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## Combat Event

Gremlin combat events seem to be growing in popularity. Another was held on March 13<sup>th</sup> which was won by Alan Meaney (but see the Casualties section to see what it cost him...). It has now been decided to remove any limitations on engine size as bigger engines don't seem to give any advantage.

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## Club Web Site Changes

Following on from the review of the new club web site in the last issue, a few further improvements have been made. There is now a Newsletter Submission page, where you can supply anything for the Newsletter on-line and have it sent straight to the editor. No excuses now for not contributing, and one article in this issue has been submitted in exactly this manner.

## Casualties



My Acro-Wot came in too fast on soft ground, the u/c came off and took the tail with it...



The last Gremlin contest claimed a few victims, most spectacularly this mid-air between **Alan Meaney** and **Peter Spragg**. Despite the rather terminal state of his plane, Alan won the competition by cutting two traces.



**Jason Streeter** is another person who is more used to photographing others' misfortune but occasionally has to record his own. This was his Ready2 after a slight misjudgement...

## Club Trainer

After a lengthy rough life in the hands of numerous novices (and quite a few more experienced members who should know better...) the Club Trainer was thought to be ready for retirement. Hence a brand new Ready2 has been bought (thanks to **Dave Cuff** at **Weston Super Models** for a substantial discount) and should hopefully keep our training facilities going for a few more years.

## Beaufighter Build

Wanting to start building again, I looked around for a relatively easy scale type which wouldn't take me the 3 years it took to finish the last one(!) and which was not another biplane (as the last 2 were). One day I came across a plan for a 10<sup>th</sup>-scale Bristol Beaufighter in a back issue of RC Scale International, and that was that. It will be my first twin, and should be a novel experience. I've not finally decided on power yet, but it will probably be two ASP 32 2-strokes or similar.

The fuselage is made from a number of formers with the sides bent around them so I needed a jig of some sort. I found the solution by making use of some lengths of 12x12mm and 25x25mm wood in the garage to make this ladder frame. The formers are screwed to the uprights, the sides are then glued and held on by rubber bands, using thick wing-bands at the front where there's quite a bit of curvature. The upper & lower sides were then added by planking until there was enough rigidity to be able to remove it from the frame.



I'm currently fitting the control runs for the tail surfaces and the steerable & retractable tailwheel (ambitious or what!) then I'll complete the planking and make a start on the wings.

And that's really as far as I've got at the moment, obviously building has been slow recently with me moving house as well. Hopefully I'll have more to show by the next newsletter.

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## Seen at the Field



This section wouldn't be complete without another scale model from **Trevor Hoskins**, and this issue is no exception. Here is Trevor's latest Tiger Moth.

## Foolishness

How to shoot yourself down. Yes it happened. I took my spare transmitter to the flying field to buddy up with a new member. The first flight showed that a problem arose when transferring the model to slave control. The model was landed, and the problem identified. I left the set up with one of the experienced flyers and then took my own model to the skies.

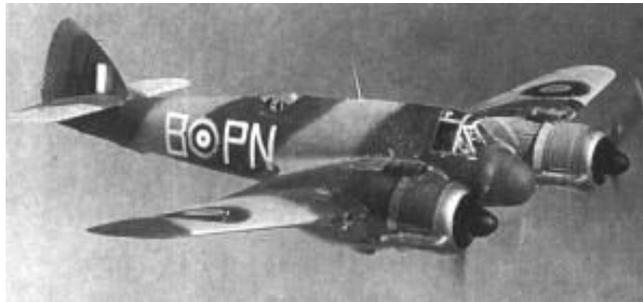
After a few minutes, I got interference trouble and the model crashed. Going back to the trainer, the problem had been resolved and the trainee had a flight. In the post crash discussions, it transpired that during the problem solving of the trainer, the slave transmitter got switched on in error. You've guessed it, it was on the same frequency as my model that was flying at the time. My fault! I didn't take the crystal out of the spare transmitter when it was being used as a slave, and it doesn't need to be switched on when in slave mode. You have been warned!!

**Pete Wood**

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## Spot the Model

The answer to last issue's puzzle was, of course, a Bristol Beaufighter. See the previous page for some details of the one I'm building.



## Waiting your Turn



If, like the member here, you've been waiting a long time for your turn, remember that it's not really good manners to tie up the field or your frequency for extended periods. Many models these days can fly for a long time on one tank-full, but if there are people waiting, please try to keep your flight down to a reasonable time. Personally I stick to about 10-15 minute flights, even though my Kadet would stay aloft for over an hour with the largest fuel tank I could put in.

## An Epic Flight

Article written by Dave George, West Mendip Soaring Association, for the WMSA newsletter

Some of the long-standing members of the **West Mendip Soaring Association** will, no doubt, be saying “haven’t seen Pat for many years (perhaps 7 or 8, since he last was a regular on the Peak), I wonder how he is?”. Many others, who have only been members for those past 7 or 8 years may be saying “**Pat Teakle?**, I’ve heard the name, but that’s about all I know about him”.

Well, Pat was one of around 8/10 flyers who formed **Weston Radio Control Model Flying Club** back in 1965, later to become W.M.S.A. (it’s just occurred to me, it’s our 40th anniversary this year). He soon became an accomplished flyer and if he was around (with the likes of, **Ken & Bob Merritt, Keith Stubbs, Terry & Andrew Fry, John Hall, Trevor Hoskins, Bob Cook**, to name a few ) you didn’t stand much chance of a decent placing in the competitions.



Pat started working for **Kamco Models** in 1975, but that didn’t work out, so in 1977, he started, with a Partner, **West Mendip Sailplanes**. They soon found out that it wasn’t going to feed two mouths, so his Partner moved on and Pat continued to run it until December 2004, producing a range of good-value kits, when he decided to taxi off to his hanger and retire. It sounded as if the writing had been on the wall for a while because, apparently, things have changed so much in recent years, that, in 2004, he sold just 5 kits (that included fuselages made by John Hall’s CMC Mouldings, who has also got out of models) whereas, in the good years, it was 5 kits a week. Much of Pat’s work had also included making foam wing sets for the likes of **Chris Foss** and others, but that also has been dropping off. This busy world we live in seems to allow less and less time for building, so extra money must be

found for an ARTF model – pop the radio in and you’re away.

Pat had a huge impact on the WMSA and is well known and greatly respected amongst the elder statesmen (maybe a few youngsters too!) of modelling in many local and distant clubs.

I hope that has given you a brief introduction to the character that Pat Teakle is and I’m sure you would all want me to wish him well in his retirement.

Right, now the flight. **EPIC**, What does that mean?

Well, I feel a suitable description could be “something of heroic (an overused word perhaps) scale that is unlikely to be repeated” and that’s what I think this flight was.

How long – time-wise and distance-wise – has your longest flight been?. Some of you may only have flown on and around the slope from which you launched, others will have perhaps ventured as far as, say, Barton Rocks or the crest of Wavering Down, others to the Trig Point for a Bronze Award, or Cross Plain for a Silver or Axbridge Roundabout for a Gold. But this flight went just a little – no, a great deal - further.

You are about to be impressed, even flabbergasted – it was from the Peak to Deer Leap, on the hill between Westbury-sub-Mendip and Ebbor Gorge, a distance, as the crow flies, of **9.1miles**, or about **10.5/11miles** on foot, and took **5 hours**.

That's why I have called it "epic"

You may remember I made a brief reference to it in one of my Newsletter Editorials going back perhaps 18 months, and I later asked Pat if he could do an article for the Newsletter, giving us an insight into how he achieved it. Not being one to put pen to paper too often, he suggested we should get together some time and he would tell me the story and let me do the scribbling. What could I say?!, anyway, I do enjoy scribbling, as you've probably gathered from my many years doing the Newsletter.

So, at last, we have had that evening together. Pat came to my home, after spending the day having a couple of flights with **Bill Hosie** (someone else who was an enthusiastic flyer and contributor to the Club during his few years with us), in Bill's Fournier RF5 motor glider based at Dunkerswell.

We had a few Senior moments reminiscing about the 'good old days', but then I listened with great interest to Pat's story.

The flight was back in 1984, but prior to that, Pat and Bob Merritt had attempted many long flights, the best they had managed being to Draycott football field in 1981 when they were both younger, around their 40s, and fitter. Not a bad effort though!! Pat also did flights to White House Farm near Loxton with **Brian Eagle** driving his car, and to Winscombe with Terry Fry both flying Solus's. An out-and-back flight to Axbridge Railway Station by Andrew Fry and Bob Cook (Bob now a member again) was also pretty impressive.

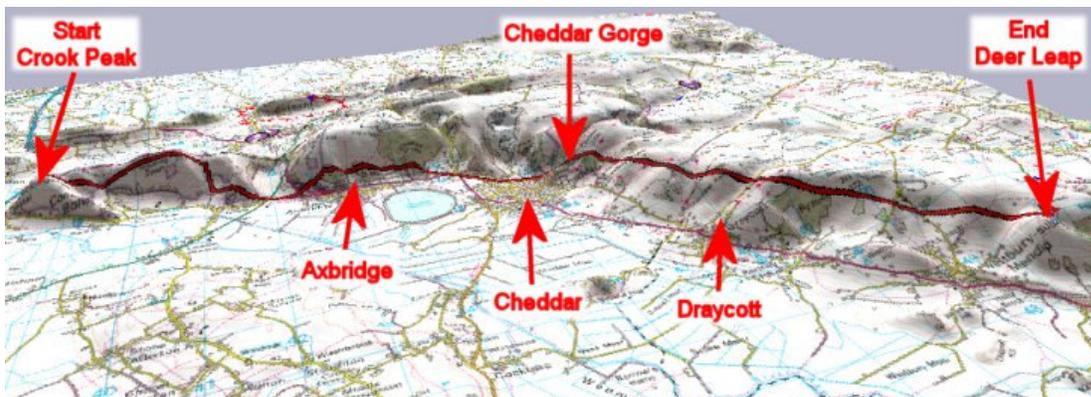
The first thing I wanted to know was "did they plan this particular flight or did they just prepare themselves and models for another adventure into the unknown, when they had the right conditions, without really knowing where it would end?" Well, sticking with Pat's storey, he did prepare his model, using a 2000mah Rx battery, and a 500mah Tx battery with another 2000mah battery on a flylead in his pocket. Frequency? – I didn't mention it, but Pat did (perhaps with a slightly sheepish smile)!! – you would never guess, how does 34.4 MHz sound or No.36, that's what he was on – illegal, yes, but you could hardly touch him for it now. Interference!, never!. As for himself, well, suitable clothing and footwear and he seems to recall having a bar of chocolate, but.....that's about it, not even a drink (more later). Call that preparation?!!.

Yes, they did have a target – the Penn Hill radio mast above Wells, WOW!.

Pat's model was a Vega, the first fuz. he had produced from a mould made by Roger Howes of the Plymouth's "Runway Southwest" model shop (who/which older members may remember), wings were stretched Vega of 15'0" span, tailplane a "hotchpotch" (Pat's words). The radio gear was Sprengbrook Microprop using linear servos (how many remember that?). Bob was flying one of Pat's Norsemans.

They set off on a Sunday morning at around 11.0am, weather conditions being bright overcast, wind S/SSW 10/15 knots producing hill lift only - not a thermal around to give a bit of extra comfort. So, first of all a circuit of the Peak, then off along the back of the Tump, around the footpath on the face of Wavering Down (no need to climb to the Trig Point level) and Cross Plain, dropping down through the timber yard to the A38 main road at Cross. Great care here whilst crossing the road and holding the models on Wavering Down/Cross Plain slopes. Into the field beside the lane towards Axbridge and make for the roundabout just off the by-pass, then transfer the models to Shute Shelve Hill as soon as everything is right. Down the by-pass towards Cheddar using Fry's Hill and passing St. Michael's Home, (a Cheshire Home, I believe) Yeo Valley Farms (Yoghurt makers who Keith Stubbs used to work for) which used to be Axbridge Mushrooms where the Club had it's meetings back in 1988-1990 (when Pat flew a power model from the Peak and landed on the lawns), to the crossroads at the bottom of the Shipham Lane.

Towards Cheddar on the A371, but soon slipping off left into Venn's Gate lane (which would take you to the quarry, which houses the Electricity Pylon Testing Station). At the time, Clive & John Hall (keen modellers in those days) lived in this lane (Clive probably still does). Now, if a couple of chaps stood in the road outside your home, staring into the sky shouting "John, John,....", you'd probably be a bit alarmed, but they didn't want anything from above, just a drink and John dutifully obliged with a pint beer mug of water.



Don't forget the models. Soon they must leave the lane and face their first difficult section needing some teamwork. They had to go through some tall dense trees, so one would go through, totally un-sighted, relying on shouted instructions from the other and as soon as he could see both models, the roles would be reversed. Continue through the back lanes/streets to bring you down to the bridge near Gough's garage at the bottom of the Gorge road.

Next difficult bit. They had to go along the road towards Bradley Cross a short distance, to find the footpath that would take them up the south east side of the Gorge towards, and past, Jacob's Ladder and the Tower. There were high walls that gave very restricted vision and that meant bringing the models out from the safe lift areas of the slopes to overhead. Once through this, it was back to the slopes. Bob dropped out at about this stage (the lift was not now adequate for the smaller model), so Pat was now on his own. The long climb up the path, past the tower and onto the hill above Bradley Cross. The most difficult flying is over, so next point to aim for is Mendip Gliding Club site at Halesland above Draycott.

Pat had a difficult moment here, probably, he thinks, due to fatigue (needs another drink!) because he lost a fair bit of height and had to pull himself together. Knowing the nearby slopes pretty well from his full-size gliding days with the Air Training Corp at Halesland before the Mendip Gliding Club days, he pushed out and along the hill to a point where he was pretty sure he would find better lift and did. So, across the lane and onwards and by now, Pat is feeling very tired. He soon came across some chaps hang-gliding above Westbury-sub-Mendip, and to his surprise, one of them was a chap he hadn't seen for around 20 years when they both lived in Stroud. He at least had a chance to scrounge another drink!!

In the meantime, Bob had gone back to John Hall's home and they both set off in search of Pat (no plans had been made on how they were going to get home if they both completed the flight - call that preparation!!...obviously hadn't been boy scouts).

Pen Hill was now "only" about 3 miles away, as the crow flies, perhaps 4 miles or so on foot, so it was looking good, even if Pat wasn't feeling good, but beyond Westbury-sub-Mendip, it began to get very difficult to maintain comfortable height due to a slight shift in wind direction. Decision time?, yes indeed, so Pat planned his landing circuit and touched down at Deer Leap beside the lane just above Easton and soon he was found by Bob & John for the journey home.

Being a great one for keeping records of his flying, Pat has this and other flights marked on a 1965 Ordnance Survey One-Inch Map-Sheet 165, which cost 6s/6d net. No M5 Motorway on this one. Pat was a little surprised that I remembered the No. of this map, but it was used by me many times back in my car rallying days.

What do you feel about luck?. Do we sometimes just get lucky, or do we make our own luck? Pat feels he was perhaps a little lucky to complete the flight. Why?. Well, on the following Wednesday, having charged the same model, it was off to the Peak again for some sport flying – and he crashed...one cell had gone down on the Rx battery!.

Quite a flight – quite a story, and I hope I have given you a good insight into what I'm sure you will agree was indeed, **an EPIC achievement.**

*Dave George*

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## Families Day

At the time of writing a Families day was being mooted, possibly on the evening of Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July. This would be similar to the successful one held last year, possibly with live music this time. For further details keep an eye on the club Web Site, or better still come to the next club meeting!

## Safety

When more than one person is using a particular frequency channel, we already have a convention that cards should be pegged to the inactive transmitter. A further improvement to this is that the inactive transmitter should be placed at the base of the pegboard to avoid any possibility of accidental switch-on.

## Readers' Letters

Dear Sirs,  
£100?? They can't be serious!! How can the club justify that amount for the use of a tiny muddy field covered in animal crap? Well I've had quite enough and I'm off. I've found an ideal site fully tarmaced and I intend to start another club there. Who wants to join me? Only a tenner a year!

**BA, Weston, Jan 5th**

Dear Sirs,  
Well after only 2 weeks I've got 10 members already! Anyone else? Only £20 annual subs!! Our new club Western Rutters is going from strength to strength!

**BA, Weston, Jan 20th**

Dear Sirs,  
Isn't there anyone else who would like to join us? It really needs more than 8 members to make a successful club, and we need the money to find a new site, after Tesco extended their opening hours and the flight-line was decimated by an old lady pushing a shopping trolley. £30 isn't really a lot these days for membership of a good friendly club.

**BA, Weston, Feb 17th**

Dear Sirs,  
Can I please make an appeal to anyone who knows of a suitable site for a flying field? We are of course looking to buy one, but with only £15.48p in the club accounts it may not be this year. With this in mind we have had to raise the subscriptions to £50, however since committee members were promised free membership, and all 5 members are on the committee, we don't have any income at present.

**BA, Weston, Mar 6th**

Dear Sirs,

### AGM

I would like to take this opportunity to publicise our club's forthcoming AGM next week. All committee places are up for renewal, but as we now have more committee places than members, it will be necessary for us to undertake several jobs each.

The main item on the agenda is a proposal to raise the club subscriptions to £100 in order to start to plan for the future.

**BA, Weston, Mar 21st**

Dear Sirs,

Once more I would appeal for anyone to help make this a successful club. Following last week's AGM, the remaining members resigned in protest at my proposal that committee members should have to pay subscriptions. I feel that their actions were quite unfair, and I was particularly hurt by their comments, surely it is reasonable that I should be exempt from the rule as the club founder. Nevertheless I think that a club needs more than 2 members to be a success, so please come along and join.

**BA, Weston, Apr 3rd**

Dear Sirs,

Please send me an application form for your club.

**BA, Weston, Apr 30th**

## BMFA

The Western Area has a new Web Site at [www.bmfawestern.org.uk](http://www.bmfawestern.org.uk). Minutes of all the area meetings (which I usually attend on behalf of the WMFC) are stored there as well as news items and links to other clubs in the region.

## Events

Forthcoming events this year:

Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2005 8pm	Club meeting at the <b>Ashcombe</b>
Sat & Sun 20 <sup>th</sup> / 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2005	Sandown Model Symposium
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Jun 2005 8pm	Club meeting at the <b>field</b>
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> Jul 2005 8pm	Club meeting at the <b>field</b>
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> Jul 2005 6pm	Families Day Event (to be confirmed)
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2005 8pm	Club meeting at the <b>field</b>

## Club Meeting Venue



### Email

If you currently get this newsletter by post and you would prefer to get it by email, let me know at the address below. Email recipients get their copy earlier and in full colour!

All club meetings apart from those in the summer months are at the **Ashcombe** pub in Ashcombe Road WSM.

## How to contact the Editor

### Ian Armstrong

Address: The Cottage, Roman Rd, Sandford, N.Somerset, BS25 5RE

Tel: 01934 823 609

Email: [iarmstrong@cix.co.uk](mailto:iarmstrong@cix.co.uk)

Thanks to **Steve O'Brien** & **Peter Jones** for printing and distribution.

The Newsletter is issued (with luck!) 4 times a year, at the end of January, April, July and October. Any contributions should be sent to the editor by the middle of that month.